

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DOHA 01198 231207Z
ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY DOHA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3932
AMEMBASSY MANAMA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BTRA, BEXP, QA
SUBJECT: CONTINENTAL BANK OF ILLINOIS VISIT TO QATAR

REF: (A) DOHA 1121 (B) STATE 193749 (C) STATE 202311

1. AMIR'S OFFICE WILL NOT RPT NOT MAKE APPOINTMENT TO SEE MR. ANDERSON AND PARTY. REASONS GIVEN ARE: A) IMPENDING ARRIVAL OF JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER (DUE SEPT 9) AND CONSEQUENT CHAOS IN GOVERNMENT OFFICES UNTIL HIS DEPARTURE SEPT 10; B) ID AL-FITR HOLIDAY WHICH PALACE HOPES TO STRETCH TO MAKE UP FOR HOLIDAYS LOST DUE TO JAPANESE P.M. VISIT; C) AMIR'S DESIRE TO START LONG DELAYED EUROPEAN VACATION. PALACE INFORMS US THAT WE MAY BE ABLE TO ARRANGE COURTESY CALL ON AMIR IF HE IS IN TOWN AND IF OTHER BUSINESS DOES NOT PREEMPT HIS TIME.

2. MR. MEDHAT ABDULATIF, OFFICE DIRECTOR OF MINISTER OF FINANCE AND PETROLEUM, INFORMED ECON OFFICE MORNING OF AUG. 23 THAT APPOINTMENT WITH MINISTER OF FINANCE AND PETROLEUM NOW VERY DOUBTFUL. ACCORDING TO OFFICE DIRECTOR, EARLIER AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE TO MEETING GRANTED BY MINISTER'S APPOINTMENT SECRETARY STILL STANDS BUT IT NOW APPEARS THAT MINISTER WILL NOT BE IN COUNTRY ON SEPT. 12. MR. MEDHAT SAID THAT MINISTER WILL LEAVE COUNTRY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER ID AL-FITR TO ATTEND A MEETING IN JIDDA IN PREPARATION FOR WASHINGTON IMF MEETING (TO WHICH
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MINISTER WILL HEAD GOQ DELEGATION). ALTHOUGH DIRECTOR WOULD NOT GIVE PRECISE DATE OF MINISTER'S PROPOSED DEPARTURE, HE STRONGLY IMPLIED THAT DATE WAS SET AND THAT DEPARTURE WAS TO BE PRIOR TO SEPT. 12.

3. WHEN ASKED ABOUT MEETING WITH DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL AFFAIRS (ABD AL-QADR AL-QADI), MR. MEDHAT SAID THAT MR. AL-QADI WOULD IN

ALL LIKELIHOOD ACCOMPANY MINISTER AS WOULD OFFICE DIRECTOR. (MR. MEDHAT IS ALSO ONE OF MINISTRY'S TOP ADMINISTRATORS AND NORMALLY WOULD RECEIVE VISITORS IN ABSENCE OF MINISTER AND DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL AFFAIRS).

4. MR. MEDHAT WAS PROFOUNDLY APOLOGETIC ABOUT SCHEDULING DIFFICULTIES AND ITERATED THAT MINISTRY OFFICIALS HAS SERIOUS DESIRE TO MEET WITH CONTINENTAL CHAIRMAN AND PARTY. HE SUGGESTED THAT THEY DELAY THEIR TRIP TO DOHA UNTIL MINISTER RETURNS FROM IMF MEETING. HE ALSO HINTED AT POSSIBILITY OF MEETING IN WASHINGTON DURING IMF MEETING.

5. MR. SAID MISHAL, DIRECTOR OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT TECHNICAL CENTER (AND ALSO PERSON WHO SIGNED RECENT INDUSTRIALIZATION LOAN AGREEMENTS FOR GOQ) IS OUT OF COUNTRY AND SECRETARY/OFFICE DIRECTOR DOES NOT HAVE RETURN DATE.

6. COMMENT: IT APPEARS THAT TOP OFFICIALS WHOM MR. ANDERSON AND PARTY SHOULD MEET WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE ON PROPOSED DATE. MEETING WITH LESSER OFFICIALS CAN PROBABLY BE ARRANGED (THOUGH THEY TEND TO DISAPPEAR WHEN THEIR PRINCIPALS ARE AWAY). MEETINGS WITH LESSER OFFICIALS WOULD BE, IN ECON OFFICER'S OPINION, NON-PRODUCTIVE AT BEST AND MAY EVEN BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE. SINCE PRINCIPALS WOULD SEE NO REASON TO UPGRADE MEETING TO THEIR LEVEL IF CONTACT INITIATED AT LOWER LEVELS. MINISTER'S DESIRE TO MEET WITH MR. ANDERSON (AS EXPRESSED BY MR. MEDHAT) SHOULD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ALSO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. EMBASSY THEREFORE RECOMMENDS THAT MR. MEDHAT'S SUGGESTION TO RESCHEDULE VISIT AT LATER DATE BE GIVEN SERIOUS CONSIDERATION BY CONTINENTAL.

7. MANAMA: PLEASE INFORM MR. CONSTABLE, MANAGER OF MANAMA CONTINENTAL OFFICE.
JABBOUR

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